

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

ALASKA SUBSISTENCE CONSULTATION

Washington, D.C.
Friday, January 21, 2022

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2 Before:

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 (3:04 p.m.)

3 MR. NEWLAND: Great. Hello, (Speaks in
4 Native language). Good morning, everybody. My
5 name Bryan Newland. I am the Assistant Secretary
6 for Indian Affairs, here at the U.S. Department of
7 the Interior. And I want to welcome everybody to
8 this Government-to-Government Consultation between
9 the Department of the Interior, the Department of
10 Agriculture, and the Department of Commerce, and
11 Tribal Nations in Alaska, regarding Federal
12 Subsistence Policy.

13 Before we begin today, we always want to
14 make sure that we have an opportunity to start our
15 meetings appropriately and in a respectful way.
16 We did not have anybody able to offer us a prayer
17 today, but what we will do is take a brief moment
18 of silence to allow everybody reflect or pray in
19 your own way, if that's your choice, for a good
20 meeting today.

21 (Moment of silence)

22 (Speaks in Native language) Thank

1 you so much. As I mentioned, my
2 name is Bryan Newland. I am the
3 Assistant Secretary here, and we
4 have representatives from across
5 three Federal Agencies here today.
6 Joining me from the Department of
7 the Interior, we have a number of
8 officials. I want to point out
9 some folks from Indian Affairs,
10 including Rose Petoskey who is a
11 counselor in our office, in the
12 Assistant Secretary's Office, as
13 well as VIA Regional Director Gene
14 Peltola. And of course, we also
15 have somebody joining us who needs
16 very little introduction to all of
17 you, Secretary Deb Haaland. Madam
18 Secretary?

19 SECRETARY HAALAND: Thank you so much,
20 Bryan, and thank you everyone. So happy to be
21 here with all of you. (Speaks in Native language).
22 Greetings, leaders, colleagues, and friends. I'm

1 honored to come to you from the ancestral
2 homelands of the Anacostan and Piscataway people
3 here in Washington, D.C.

4 First, I want to thank you all for
5 participating in this important consultation,
6 which will help the Departments of the Interior
7 and Agriculture gain your valuable input on the
8 Federal Assistance Program. Alaska Native Peoples
9 are the original stewards of the vast landscape
10 that we now know as Alaska. Your knowledge has
11 been passed down from generation to generation.
12 It deserves to be recognized, respectfully, and
13 incorporated into the work that we do at our
14 Departments.

15 When I visited Alaska a few years ago, I
16 couldn't help but notice the incredible ways that
17 Alaska Natives lived in harmony with nature and
18 responsibly reaped the bounty that Alaska has to
19 offer. I look so forward to visiting Alaska again
20 this year to meet with folks on the ground and
21 learn more about the significant work that we are
22 and can accomplish together. Today's consultation

1 will further center your voices as we work to
2 address the climate changes impacts and the ways
3 with which Federal Agencies can be better partners
4 in promoting subsistence, harvest opportunities,
5 and protecting habitats that make all of those
6 traditions possible.

7 As we move forward in service to that
8 goal, we do so with the support and commitment of
9 President Biden and the entire Biden-Harris
10 administration. Each Cabinet Agency is committed
11 to meaningful Tribal consultation, fulfilling our
12 trust responsibilities and strengthening our
13 Nation-to-Nation relationships across all areas of
14 the Federal Government. As someone's whose story
15 is not unlike many of yours, I know how much this
16 means to Indigenous communities. It's a historic
17 opportunity to lend our voices to decisions that
18 impact our families and our communities, through
19 the administration's all of government approach,
20 the consultation in which indigenous people are
21 consulted before policies are developed, instead
22 of after they have determined.

1 At the White House Tribal Nation's
2 Summit, in this -- this past November, it was
3 incredibly insightful to hear from Alaska Native
4 Leaders and their perspectives on climate change
5 and its impact on traditional life ways that help
6 communities survive in Alaska's sometimes
7 unforgiving environment. I hope that today
8 further explores your feedback. Together, we're
9 working to ensure that we're grounding decisions
10 in our shared heritage, and we're always mindful
11 that Tribal Leaders know best how to help their
12 people.

13 I know how important Alaska Native
14 subsistence rights are to all of you. It is one
15 of our priorities, to ensure that the right to
16 hunt, fish, and gather is upheld now and for
17 future generations of Native Alaskans. I want you
18 to know that the Department is committed to
19 working with you, and we're eager to hear your
20 voices and priorities during this consultation.
21 As we look ahead to the future, we're facilitation
22 the distribution of billions of dollars to

1 Indigenous communities, thanks to the Bipartisan
2 Infrastructure Law.

3 This funding will help support Alaska
4 Native Villages, that are literally being washed
5 away by coastal erosion and experiencing changes
6 to their life ways because of the changing
7 climate. This funding and these efforts will be
8 transformational, and we look forward to moving
9 this conversation forward in the coming months.
10 Thank you so much for everything you do, every
11 day, to care for people and your communities.
12 Please know that our doors are always open to you.
13 We look forward to more opportunities to connect
14 with you. (Speaks in Native language) Thank you.
15 And back to you -- oh, back to Bob.

16 MR. ANDERSON: Okay. Thank you, Madam
17 Secretary, it's always a daunting task to follow
18 you, but hi, everybody, I'm Bob Anderson. And I
19 think I know many of you on the screen here and,
20 you know, I've worked around Alaskan issues for
21 almost my entire career, opening NARF's Office up
22 there, in 1984, and representing, for almost my

1 entire legal career, Katie John, and the issues
2 surrounding her battle for subsistence fishing
3 rights on the Copper River and Tonata (phonetic)
4 Creek. So, I'm really thrilled to be the
5 Secretary's lawyer and to be back into these
6 issues, this time, from my perch, running the
7 Solicitor's Office here out of Washington D.C.
8 And I -- you know, really I've been very familiar
9 with the many, many proposals that have surfaced
10 over the years to, you know, fix what was
11 wrongfully removed in ANCSA with the
12 extinguishment -- the purported extinguishment of
13 Aboriginal hunting and fishing rights and the, you
14 know, mostly inadequate replacement with the Title
15 VIII of ANILCA.

16 And so, I've participated in many
17 different forums over the years, with many of you
18 talking about solutions. And I look forward to
19 listening this afternoon, and hearing about your
20 ideas about how to improve the situation on the
21 ground for Native communities throughout Alaska,
22 and to work jointly with you in the coming years

1 to actually make those improve in the system, and
2 most importantly sustaining the way of life that
3 Alaska Native people have and have always had.
4 So, thank you for participating today, and I look
5 forward to hearing your thoughts and working with
6 you in the future. So, Bryan, I'll kick it back
7 to you.

8 MR. NEWLAND: Okay, thanks, Bob.
9 Thanks, Madam Secretary. We appreciate you taking
10 time to join us on this consultation today, and I
11 appreciate you sharing for all of us how much of a
12 priority this is for us and for the
13 administration. I now want to turn over to my
14 friend and colleague from over at USDA, Heather
15 Dawn Thompson.

16 MS THOMPSON: Thank you so much, Bryan.
17 My name is Heather Dawn Thompson. I'm a citizen
18 of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe in South Dakota.
19 And it's an honor to be with you here today. I am
20 the Director of the Office of Tribal Relations,
21 within the Office of the Secretary at USDA. I
22 work directly for Secretary Vilsack, and he sends

1 his greetings, not only to you, Tribal Leaders, to
2 Secretary Haaland. They are not only colleagues,
3 they are friends, and he is delighted to be doing
4 this joint consultation with you, Secretary.

5 This is historic, and I hope we all
6 appreciate the importance of all these Federal
7 agencies coming together, rather than making you
8 consult with us each individually, which has
9 historically been our pattern. So, we've heard
10 you about the importance of joining forces and
11 doing this together. So, we're delighted to be
12 with our partners at the Department of Interior,
13 and NOAA, and our other Federal agencies today.

14 In addition to myself, as serving as the
15 Consulting Official for the Secretary, I'm joined
16 by colleague, Dave Schmid. Dave is the Regional
17 Forester, for the State of Alaska, and the Alaska
18 Region, for the United States Forest Service. And
19 many of you know him from his hard years of work
20 on the Subsistence Board and his commitment to
21 this issue within Alaska.

22 Secretary Vilsack wants to reiterate how

1 important this conversation is to USDA. He
2 announced recently, in November, as you probably
3 saw, the USDA Indigenous Food Sovereignty
4 Initiative, to challenge USDA to think differently
5 about how we deal with Indigenous traditional
6 ecological knowledge, land management,
7 subsistence, foods, what types of animals and
8 plants we subsidize, what types of animals and
9 plants we put money to research. And perhaps no
10 place is that more important than Alaska.

11 Not only do I live half of the year in
12 South Dakota. My husband is from Sitka and
13 Juneau, so I live half the year, usually in Sitka.
14 So, I get to join you today as a colleague and as
15 a neighbor. Thank you so much for having us,
16 Bryan.

17 MR. NEWLAND: Thank you, Heather Dawn,
18 for being here and for your partnership, and the
19 partnership of everyone at USDA. Now, I want to
20 turn it over to our friends from the Department of
21 Commerce and NOAA, who are also participating in
22 this consultation and this is a reflection of the

1 administration's commitment for all agencies and
2 branches of government to work together in
3 upholding our trust responsibility. So, toward
4 that end I will pass it to Assistant Administrator
5 for the National Marine Fishery Service, Janet
6 Coit.

7 MS. COIT: Thank you, good morning, and
8 good afternoon. Thank you, Bryan, Secretary
9 Haaland, and other Interior and Agriculture
10 Representatives. I'm very pleased to be here on
11 behalf of Secretary Raimondo to be part of the
12 Government-to-Government Consultation.

13 As mentioned, I'm Janet Coit. I'm the
14 Assistant Administrator for NOAA Fisheries and
15 also the acting Assistant Secretary for Oceans and
16 Atmosphere. Here with me today, from the Commerce
17 Department from NOAA, is Kelly Kryc, the Deputy
18 Assistant Secretary for International Fisheries,
19 who also is handling Arctic issues for NOAA, and
20 also, our Regional Administrator at the National
21 Marine Fishery Service, Doug Mecum.

22 I just want to take a moment to say, we

1 feel the awesome responsibility at NOAA Fisheries,
2 for working with Tribes and states on managing
3 fisheries and marine resources. We collaborate
4 regionally, nationally, and I'm so pleased to be
5 part of this session today to listen and learn.
6 I've been in my job a little over seven months,
7 so, I'm still getting up to speed on a number of
8 issues, including the vast scope of issues at the
9 National Marine Fishery Service, in Alaska.

10 But I just want to highlight, as
11 Secretary Haaland did, that climate change and the
12 rapid changes that we're seeing in our ecosystems,
13 our marine ecosystems, our rivers, warming water,
14 shifting stocks, habitat alteration or
15 compression, are greatly concerning, and we feel a
16 sense of responsibility and urgency as we look to
17 understand, mitigate, and fulfill our stewardship
18 responsibilities.

19 Earlier today, Secretary Raimondo
20 announced six Fishery Disaster Declarations, just
21 in Alaska, including salmon on the Yukon River,
22 the Kuskokwim River, some of the rivers, and some

1 of the issues that I'm sure people will raise
2 today, and that people raised yesterday, with
3 great concerns over what is happening, and lack of
4 access to fishing, and food, and heritage. So,
5 I'll stop there and say, again, that I'm very
6 pleased to listen, and learn, and be part of this
7 important consultation today. Thank you.

8 MR. NEWLAND: Thank you, Janet, so much.
9 And thanks to everybody from the Department of
10 Commerce for joining us today.

11 So, before opening the floor, just some
12 housekeeping items I want to take care of. If you
13 are joining by phone, and you wish to raise your
14 hand, you can press the *9 buttons on your phone.
15 If you want to get into the speaker que, our
16 preference is to use the raise your hand function,
17 which is on the bottom of your Zoom screen, under
18 the reactions button. And I will do my best to
19 call on folks in the order that I see their hand
20 come up. And I just ask for your patience with
21 me.

22 And also, recognize that we have about

1 100 minutes of floor time for Tribal Leaders and
2 Representatives, and so, I just ask our speakers
3 to aware of others who wish to speak. We are also
4 going to ask to give priority to elected Tribal
5 Leaders and their designated representatives, and
6 then inner- Tribal organizations and consortia
7 representatives, as well.

8 In December, we sent a Dear Tribal
9 Leader Letter, and Dear CEO Letter out with some
10 framing questions for this consultation, and we
11 put four questions to you, to guide this
12 discussion. The first question we asked is, how
13 has climate change effected subsistence? What
14 changes could be made to subsistence policies,
15 regulations, or laws to help you adapt to those
16 changes? The second question we asked, is how can
17 Federal agencies better cooperate with Alaska
18 Native Tribes, Alaska Native Consortia, Alaska
19 Native Organizations, and Alaska Native
20 Corporations to promote subsistence harvest
21 opportunities and protect habitat? The third
22 question that we asked was, how does state

1 management -- does the state management regime
2 affect implementation of the Federal priority or
3 rural residents? Question number four was, how
4 can the Federal Subsistence Board and the Federal
5 Subsistence Program be changed to better
6 accommodate Alaska Native subsistence needs? And
7 question five is, what difficulties have you
8 experienced in accessing subsistence resources?

9 So, with that, we will open the floor.
10 Reminder, that this is a Government-to-Government
11 Consultation between the United States and Tribes.
12 It is not open to the press or intended for
13 attribution on the record. And we do ask that any
14 media members, who are listening in, please
15 disconnect now, and contact the Department if you
16 have questions regarding our subsistence policies
17 and programs.

18 Our initial order of speakers is in the
19 chat. We will start with Faye Ewan, followed by
20 Brian Ridley, Willard Hand, Steven Hartford, and
21 Joel Jackson. So, Faye, if you're able, can you
22 please unmute? The floor is yours. Okay, I'm not

1 hearing or seeing Faye. So, we will move to Brian
2 Ridley.

3 MR. RIDLEY: Thank you. My name is
4 Brian Ridley. I'm from the Native Village of
5 Eagle, on the Yukon River at the Canadian Border.
6 I'm the TCC President, Tanana Chiefs Conference,
7 which is a consortium of 37 Federally recognized
8 Tribes. I want to thank Secretary Haaland, Raina
9 Thiele, Assistant Secretary Bryan Newland, and
10 Heather Dawn Thompson for their leadership and for
11 all of DOI and DOC Staff listening.

12 We acknowledge all of the Tribal leaders
13 and citizens who have taken the time to share
14 their experiences and solutions with you. We
15 stand in unity, as Alaska Native People and Tribal
16 Governments. We appreciate the opportunity to
17 provide actionable recommendations on Federal
18 Subsistence Policy. This is our wellbeing, our
19 health, our culture, our spirituality, our food,
20 our way of life. These recommendations are not
21 new.

22 Having been repeated for decades, and

1 congressional testimonies, field hearings,
2 roundtables, Tribal consultations, Executive and
3 Secretarial orders, and DOI recommendations, the
4 recommendations do not supplant the need to
5 revisit ANILCA Title VIII to provide for its
6 intent to protect and provide for Alaska Native
7 ways of life, on Alaska Native and Public lands
8 and water. To this end, at minimum, Title VIII
9 must be amended to provide for an Alaska Native
10 priority, not be based on residency, but on Tribal
11 Citizenship recognizing the trust relationship.

12 As you've heard repeatedly, current
13 Federal Subsistence Management Policy is failing,
14 criminalizing our people, as they are ticketed,
15 fined, and harassed for the traditional practices
16 of hunting, fishing, and gathering.
17 Criminalization of our traditional ways of life
18 must end. It is within the power of this
19 administration to use discretion, when engaging in
20 statutory compliance in and near Tribal
21 communities, towards hunting, fishing and
22 gathering activities performed by our Native --

1 our Tribal people.

2 On climate change, as you've heard, our
3 people are on the front lines of climate change.
4 Our fish caches along the Yukon are empty. Our
5 hunters some home empty-handed, during warm falls.
6 One of the moose I took in the fall, I was
7 actually wearing shorts, flip flops, and a tank
8 top, and that's not normal for Alaska, by any
9 means. And struggling to access hunting grounds
10 in winter on thin ice. The current Federal
11 Subsistence Management regulatory process is
12 unresponsive and unaccommodating to seasonal
13 fluctuations and further maintains decision-making
14 power, largely in the hands of those who have no
15 knowledge of local conditions and needs, leaving
16 our freezers empty.

17 To this, we submit to you proposed
18 amendments to the Federal Subsistence Management
19 Regulations and details I'll share later in my
20 testimony. On cooperation, we appreciate
21 Assistant Secretary Newland calling on the
22 National Marine Fishery Service to uphold their

1 trust responsibility and unique
2 government-to-government relationship with Tribal
3 Governments. We ask DOI Leadership to continue to
4 do so. We appreciate the Executive Orders, the
5 memos, Secretarial Orders, and existing legal
6 opportunities to enter into relationships to
7 further consultation, collaboration, and co-
8 management.

9 However, we do not see these fulfilled.
10 They do not translate into action. As has also
11 been noted, Federal Staff in the prior
12 administration have been obstructionist in
13 furthering cooperative and collaborative
14 management. Federal Human Resource Policies
15 recruit and maintain leadership and staff with
16 little knowledge or experience of Alaskan Native
17 ways of life, who are unable and unwilling to
18 advance Tribal self-governance.

19 We, therefore, call for the
20 administration, to ensure all requests from Tribal
21 Governments and Organizations, to enter into
22 cooperative agreements and relationships, are

1 answered with action, and with a developed and
2 implemented plan to transfer -- and transfer of
3 adequate funding to properly carry it out. We
4 call for a review of Federal Human Resource
5 Policies in Alaska, DOI agencies, to ensure
6 institutional knowledge of Alaska Native ways of
7 life, including positions, such as refuge
8 managers, parks superintendents, in-season
9 fisheries managers.

10 We also appreciate and applaud the
11 diligent work of Crystal Leonetti, U.S. Fish and
12 Wildlife Services Alaska Native Affairs liaison,
13 who tirelessly works to build positive and
14 productive working relationships between agencies
15 and Tribal Governments. We need more people like
16 Crystal.

17 On State Management, the State of Alaska
18 is aggressively combative towards providing for
19 Alaska Native Subsistence, openly threatening and
20 entering into litigation, when the Federal
21 Subsistence Board upholds their responsibilities
22 to ANILCA. The second day the current

1 administration was in office, they criminalized
2 the taking of cow moose for ceremonial potlatch,
3 in the very community of Minto, that legally
4 fought to protect these hunts. So long as the
5 Department of Fish and Games Leadership and Budget
6 is directly funded by commercial hunting and
7 fishing activities, the anti-subsistence lobby,
8 the only solution to this, is legislation.

9 Onto changes of the Federal Subsistence
10 Board, we invested in the secretarial review of
11 Federal Subsistence Management in 2010.
12 Secretarial findings and recommended actions are
13 yet to be enacted, 12 years later. We ask that
14 you revisit and implement the remaining
15 recommendations. For time, I will not reiterate
16 all of those here. As mentioned, we have drafted
17 proposed amendments to the Federal Subsistence
18 Management Regulations to ensure increased Alaska
19 Native and Tribal Government Representation,
20 voice, and participation in decision-making.

21 Included in the amendments are
22 relocation of the Office of Subsistence

1 Management, from Fish and Wildlife Service to the
2 Office of the Secretary. This move is critical to
3 affecting change. Appointing five public members
4 for the Federal Subsistence Board who possess
5 traditional knowledge, and have direct experience
6 with subsistence in rural Alaska, three of whom
7 are representatives of Federally Recognized Tribal
8 Governments, and Secretarial Deference for
9 appointment of Regional Advisor Council Members,
10 and clarifying delegation of authority to
11 Federally recognized Tribal Governments, and,
12 lastly, clarifying emergency procedures to ensure
13 accountability and timely action.

14 In addition to regulatory changes,
15 staffing is inadequate with limited Tribal
16 liaisons and Alaska Native staff. Self-governance
17 agreements must be considered to implement the
18 Federal Subsistence Management Program. We
19 respectfully request to work with the Office of
20 the Secretary to further these apposed amendments
21 and recommended actions.

22 In closing, it is critical that we also

1 recognize Tribal Governments are woefully
2 underfunded to adequately engage in and maintain
3 trust, natural resource stewardship of lands,
4 waters, and resources, of special geographic
5 historic or cultural significance to our Tribal
6 Citizens. This must be addressed within the BIA
7 Green Book, at adequate noncompetitive funding
8 levels. I appreciate all of you time, and my
9 staff and I stand ready to assist all of you in
10 helping to make these changes for the benefits of
11 our people. (Speaks in Native language). Thank
12 you.

13 MR. NEWLAND: (Speaks in Native
14 language). Thank you, President Ridley. Thank
15 you for your comments today. They are certainly
16 consistent with what we've been hearing throughout
17 this consultation process. I just want to draw
18 attention to two things and ask for a follow up
19 from you, President Ridley. You know, you had
20 mentioned inadequate funding for Tribal Management
21 and certainly working to build capacity at the
22 Tribal level, for things like resource management

1 and co-management. It is something that we are
2 interested in doing, and I want to look at you all
3 for guidance in how we can be most helpful in
4 doing that.

5 You had also mentioned the Executive
6 Orders and Secretarial Orders not turning into
7 action, on the ground level, through the agencies.
8 That's something that, if that's occurring, we
9 want to hear about it. And when it comes to co-
10 management, the Secretarial Order that was signed
11 by Secretary Haaland and Secretary Vilsack is an
12 invitation to Tribes to present co-management
13 proposals to us. And we want to get those in
14 place, and we want to move from policy statements
15 to action and implementation. And if you're
16 experiencing difficulty with that, please don't
17 hesitate to bring that to my attention, or if it's
18 at USDA, to bring it to Heather Dawn's attention,
19 and we'll see if we can pick it up and run with
20 it.

21 And lastly, you had referenced a draft
22 -- or a proposal to amend the Subsistence Program

1 Regulations. I would be interested in seeing
2 that. I haven't seen your submission, and if you
3 could email that to us, I would really appreciate
4 it. Thank you, President Ridley.

5 MR. RIDLEY: Thank you.

6 MR. NEWLAND: I see that we have Faye
7 Ewin back. So, I'm going to go a little out of
8 order. I know we had Willard on deck, but Faye if
9 you're here -- somebody is sharing a screen.

10 MS. EWAN: Yes, hello, this is Faye
11 Ewan.

12 MR. NEWLAND: Hi, Faye.

13 MS. EWAN: (Speaks in Native language).
14 I come from the Copper River Region. My people is
15 Udishau (phonetic) Caribou Clan. I come from a
16 long line of Matriarch Leaders and a long line of
17 traditional leaders of the sovereignty of Alaska,
18 from our ancestors to today. Today, I am
19 attending a Board of Game Meeting with the State
20 of Alaska. I would like to talk about the
21 environment and the traditional ways, and how much
22 of our traditional ways have been lost, our

1 language, our circle of life, the animals, the
2 fish, the human beings, we all are one circle of
3 life.

4 We still have our traditional way, here
5 in Alaska. We still have potlatches, we still
6 have ceremonies, we still recognize our
7 traditional way. ANILCA's stand has never changed
8 their ways, they always were the same. We still
9 continue that tradition. And one of the things
10 that interrupts our traditional way of life, our
11 harmony, and with the water, we're traditional
12 steward -- land stewardships. We take care of the
13 land. We take care of the people, the animals
14 can't speak for themselves, so, we speak for them
15 today.

16 The environment has been polluted in
17 Alaska. There's been so many disasters with the
18 oil spills, that's a big effect on our land.
19 Also, Copper River was affected by Prince William
20 Sound. Copper River salmon has been declining
21 forever. I've been there all my life. I grew up,
22 and I was raised and born there. And the caribou

1 and the moose is really affected by the
2 population. It's overpopulated hunting. Also,
3 the traditional people, all their land that was
4 their traditional hunting, fishing, trapping land
5 was taken by the State of Alaska, before we could
6 adequately pick the land and keep what we're
7 trying to keep, for our traditional way where our
8 hunting, fishing, and land was.

9 We didn't just go somewhere and just
10 throw a fishing line in the river. We didn't just
11 go to a hunting camp and go there. We had to had
12 to ask the Matriarchs of that Tribe, of that
13 Chief's village, if we can hunt on their land.
14 There is so much traditional law that's been given
15 up here. I know these people all speak for their
16 government. I'm also a Tribal Judge. I serve on
17 my Tribal Government for many years, and I've been
18 an advocate for a long time, for my Tribe and my
19 people in the Copper River Region.

20 I went to NOAA and all these other
21 places, that we asked many, many, times to close
22 down the fishing, before the seasons opened

1 because we can tell by the weather, by the leaves,
2 by the nature, what kind of fishing season we're
3 going to get. We can tell by the way that -- when
4 we open up a moose, even them biologists don't
5 even know this. The scientists in the whole
6 United States and the world don't even know the
7 traditional knowledge the Native people carry.

8 When you open up a moose, and the first
9 thing you look at, when you get that moose, you
10 know what kind of season you're going to have.
11 You know what kind of weather you're going to
12 have. If the kidneys are all fat, real fat, you
13 know you're going to have a real cold winter. And
14 when you see the berries coming, you can see what
15 kind of winter we're going to have with the
16 bumblebees. All these traditional ways has never
17 been acknowledged or even implemented in anything
18 around here. We've been speaking for 60 some
19 years, with the State of Alaska, to tell them how
20 we live and how we are fighting.

21 Today, in Copper River, we have no meat
22 in our smokehouse. We have no fish hanging in our

1 smokehouse. Our children are losing their
2 traditional way because they can't provide for
3 them because there's a shortage of it, and why?
4 Because of the way they do the seasonal hunting
5 and fishing. And we told them many, many times,
6 the State of Alaska, to close down, shut down the
7 fishing. Do -- I ask many, many times to do a
8 moratorium to let it build back up, but, nope,
9 they keep letting it decline and decline. To me,
10 I feel like my sovereignty of my Tribe, the
11 sovereignty of my autonomy rights, our -- all our
12 rights are still intact in Alaska, all us
13 indigenous rights. We was never demolished or
14 taken, or did we surrender, or did we seize it.
15 We still have all our right intact, and this is my
16 testimony. Thank you for listening to me, and I'm
17 very proud of all of you.

18 And, Bob Anderson, it's so good to see
19 you. You know where we stand and how we do our
20 things here in Alaska, all of you. It's not just
21 that we put a fish wheel in the river. We
22 provide. When we have a fish wheel, we provide

1 for all of our families. We prove for people
2 beyond there. And when we get moose, we hear you
3 got no moose in your village, we take you part of
4 it. We don't just put it in a freezer, and just
5 say, here this is our subsistence. We don't call
6 it subsistence, we call it our way of life, in
7 Copper River, in Ahtna (speaking Native language).
8 We say (Speaks in Native language). That means we
9 eat good, and (Speaks in Native language) means
10 you stand up good, you are strong, you can do it.

11 And that's what our people need to
12 realize. They need to -- the
13 government-to-government relationship is finally
14 waking up and serving us up here in Alaska. We've
15 been asleep ever since 1971, December 18, when our
16 -- when we got shocked with all the stuff that --
17 where social engineering, all the stuff that
18 happened to our people. We're still dealing with
19 issues today. We got eco issues. We got all
20 kinds of issues, besides the subsistence and the
21 land, and our way of life. I just want to thank
22 you Debbie Haaland and all of you guys (Speaks in

1 Native language). Thank you.

2 MR. NEWLAND: (Speaks in Native
3 language). Thank you, Faye, so much. I
4 appreciate your comments, and the importance of --
5 you're right that it's -- subsistence is, you
6 know, a different word for the life ways for so
7 many people in Alaska and in your communities. I
8 appreciate you enforcing that or reenforcing that.

9 MS. EWAN: And one more thing about the
10 environment, in the Copper River. I live in the
11 Copper River Region. The water temperature has
12 changed drastically. The lakes and the creeks has
13 been drying up, and the migratory for the caribou
14 has changed and we also have a harp in Copper
15 River that -- this big ole wire thing that they
16 use to control weather or whatever they use it
17 for, but, anyways, that was implemented in the
18 Copper River, and that changed the migratory bird
19 system. And there was more things that we -- that
20 happened, in the last few years, in the Copper
21 River Region, and plus all over Alaska.

22 And another thing, too, is that a lot of

1 people in the Copper River Region, we started this
2 on -- in the Tribal Resource Commission, we tried
3 to do a co-management with Secretary Jewell. We
4 are working on that with -- and I would like to
5 see that implemented here because we need a seat
6 at the Board. We need a seat at the Federal
7 Board, from every Tribe, we need a seat. Just
8 like the policymakers. The policy makers, they
9 make policies with the staff people that worked
10 for the government. I think that, you know, the
11 Secretary of every department should be the one
12 that makes the final decisions on all of the
13 things that's happening here in Alaska, not just
14 in a meeting.

15 And I think all this stuff that's been
16 -- all the laws and hunting regulations, and
17 everything, we can talk till we're blue, we're red
18 people. And we turn -- and we try to protect our
19 land, and the moose and caribou, fish, the
20 mammals, every little creature on there, even the
21 spider, we save them. That is how much we are --
22 I mean our circle of life, our traditional way,

1 Ahtna people, we still speak our language. We
2 still hunt and fish, just like we used to. We
3 still do everything we exercise, but, again, with
4 the policy and regulations that's being pushed
5 down on us, it changes our way of life
6 drastically, and pretty soon our kids -- our
7 children, our seventh generations are not going to
8 be able to say, I'm an Indigenous Ahtna (Speaks in
9 Native language).

10 It's not -- it's sad. I'm watching it
11 slowly go away. Our elders are leaving. But
12 anyways, the environment has impacted a lot of
13 different things in the Copper River Region, and
14 also the population around all our hunting and
15 bird -- fishing grounds, too, has -- Alaska has
16 grown from 200,000 people for many, many years,
17 and in the last five years, I think, we got over
18 600,000 people moved to Alaska. And there is a
19 lot of state land opened, all over Alaska, where
20 we hunt and fish. It's going to be pretty soon,
21 having -- they're going to have people in
22 populations there, and we will never be able to go

1 hunt there anymore, and that's the thing that
2 Federal Governments has done, is that they were
3 friendly to us from the beginning.

4 We did the customary traditional
5 writing. Me and my father, late father, Peter
6 Ewan, we wrote that up, and we put it in the
7 meeting. That's the first time the Federal
8 Government -- that opened up their Federal
9 Meeting. I said, let's put this in there, they
10 need to recognize our Tribes, that we do have --
11 we're different. We're not like every other
12 hunter, but thank you, anyways, I'm getting off
13 track here. Thank you. (Speaks in Native
14 language).

15 MR. NEWLAND: Thank you so much, Faye.
16 I really appreciate it. And I don't know if you
17 can see the chat function, but Bob Anderson says
18 hi.

19 MS. EWAN: Mm-hmm.

20 MR. NEWLAND: All right, our next
21 speaker --

22 MS. EWAN: And I'm at a Board and Game

1 Meeting with the State of Alaska, while I'm
2 talking to you guys.

3 MR. NEWLAND: Well, thank you for taking
4 time with us. I appreciate it.

5 MS. EWAN: You're welcome.

6 MR. NEWLAND: Please take care, Faye.
7 Our next speaker is Willard Hand, and then after
8 Willard, we will have Steven Hartford and Joel
9 Jackson. If you wish to speak, you can use the
10 raise hand function under the reactions bar or
11 button, on the bottom of your screen, or if you're
12 on the phone, please press *9. Willard?

13 MR. HAND: All right, thanks for --
14 thanks, I appreciate it, Bryan. I've been honored
15 to be born and raised in the in the Ahtna Region.
16 I'm the Tribal Administrator for the Native
17 Village of Kluti-Kaah. I work for Faye. I was
18 honored to follow Faye, but she's tough to follow.
19 And I appreciated things Bryan had to say, too.

20 I was going to go down the bullet
21 points. I also serve on the National Tribal
22 Caucus, through the EPA, as their Climate Change

1 Lead. So, I can talk till we all get tired of
2 hearing me about climate change in Alaska. So,
3 please keep my information, and refer to me as a
4 resource, Tribal partners, and Federal partners.
5 I would love to spend time later and talk about
6 that. The Native Village of Kluti-Kaah will
7 submit comments in writing.

8 But I want to echo the things I heard
9 our leaders say yesterday. I want to echo the
10 things Faye said today, and Bryan said, they're
11 all true. I'm in a unique area in Alaska, the
12 Ahtna Region. We're surrounded by ANSCA land and
13 state land. We're on the road system of Alaska.
14 So, we're impacted, you know, our 2,000 people out
15 there trying to survive, the long winters away
16 from everybody. We're competing with tens of
17 thousands of people, from the larger populations
18 that come get our moose.

19 I been there my whole life and watched
20 those changes happen. And it's -- so, we're,
21 like, I'm here with Faye, actually, at the State
22 Board of Game Meeting to talk about just that

1 thing. The changes that need to be made is the
2 Federal Government needs to look at the trust
3 responsibility to our people, and we need to
4 figure out this land status thing in Alaska. The
5 State of Alaska has been long overdue to
6 recognized Tribal status, so, that's a big change
7 that has to happen.

8 As a Tribal Administrator, the last few
9 years, one of my jobs, one of the things I do is
10 distribute meat from our hunts, from the community
11 hunts. The last two years, I've went to 80
12 households and gave one to five-pound packages of
13 meat and said here's your subsistence for the
14 year. Enjoy your five pounds of moose meat. It's
15 just heart breaking to see that happen to the
16 Ahtna people. We used to hunt in our area. Over
17 the decades we had to move. Now, we're trying to
18 get moose hundreds of miles from our home and
19 competing with thousands of hunters with off-road
20 vehicles.

21 My late father hunted for 35 years on
22 the Denali Highway, by horses, in the walking

1 area, to avoid these urban hunters. And I -- no
2 disrespect to my fellow Alaskan citizens, but, you
3 know, when you live in the Ahtna Region, it's 60
4 below zero, and you can't get food for your family
5 because it's overhunted from the -- you know, it's
6 just a huge battle. We've got figure that out as
7 a team. And I haven't lived in other parts of the
8 state, so, it's hard for me to know their
9 subsistence need because we're all so different
10 and different geographic makeups.

11 But I know that our moose have changed,
12 our fish have changed. We have lost our
13 permafrost layer. Our berries are being pushed
14 out by different plants. And the berry size and
15 texture has changed. These are things that are
16 due to climate change. And not only do we not
17 have the tools to compete with climate change,
18 we're still competing with 60 year old hunting
19 regulations and fighting to get the trust
20 responsibilities fulfilled to our people. And I
21 do this on a daily basis, as a Tribal
22 Administrator.

1 My job is to help the Federal Government
2 fill the trust responsibility to the Kluti-Kaah
3 people. So, I think there's a lot of changes to
4 be made, and I love that you guys have come to the
5 table as a group. I want to thank Bob Anderson
6 for calling in. And it was cool to see Deb this
7 morning. Bryan, thank you for hosting this. I
8 have tons of comments, and I will put my email in
9 the chat box for everybody to jot down, to get a
10 hold of me later. I'll yield some of my time to
11 the next speaker. I was proud to represent the
12 Ahtna people today and talk a little bit about my
13 native village of Kluti-Kaah. I'm tuning in from
14 Dena'ina country, so, I want to thank the Dena'ina
15 people for having me here, for this Board of Game
16 Meeting today, and you guys take care. Thank you,
17 again.

18 MR. NEWLAND: Thank you so much, Mr.
19 Hand. Appreciate that you took some time with us.
20 I know that you and Faye have other important work
21 that you're doing today as well. So, thank you
22 for your comments. Our next speaker is Steven

1 Hartford, and after Steven, we have Joel Jackson.

2 MR. HARTFORD: Yes, good afternoon, Mr.
3 Assistant Secretary, thank you. Steve Hartford,
4 I'm here on behalf of Ketchikan Indian Community,
5 and I'd like to defer to our Council Vice
6 President, Trixie Bennett, if that's possible?

7 MR. NEWLAND: Yes.

8 MR. HARTFORD: Okay, thank you. I think
9 she's on the phone. Trixie?

10 MR. NEWLAND: To unmute yourself,
11 Trixie, please press *6.

12 MR. HARTFORD: I'll send that message to
13 her. Can you just give us one minute?

14 MR. NEWLAND: Sure.

15 MR. HARTFORD: I know time is limited.

16 MR. NEWLAND: Okay, in the meantime,
17 just a reminder. We are accepting written
18 comments on the consultation -- or through this
19 consultation process. You can submit those
20 comments to consultation-ak@ios.doi.gov by
21 February 15th. Please include Subsistence
22 Consultation in the subject line. If you wish to

1 speak, please use the raised hand function, at the
2 bottom of your screen under reactions. Trixie,
3 have you been able to unmute yourself? Steve, if
4 you'd like, I can go to next speaker, and when you
5 are able to get the Vice President, just send me a
6 message and using the -- or direct in the chat
7 function, and we'll come back to you.

8 MR. HARTFORD: I will do that, thank
9 you.

10 MR. NEWLAND: Okay. I want to make sure
11 we're using our time so everyone has a chance.

12 MR. HARTFORD: Yes, of course.

13 MR. NEWLAND: Okay, so, with that, Joel
14 Jackson?

15 MR. JACKSON: Good morning, everyone.
16 My name is Joel Jackson. I'm the President of the
17 Organized Village of Kake, have been for the last
18 three and a half years. I've been on the council
19 for over 30 years. So, I've been around many
20 consultations, well, it was called a consultation
21 back then, but it never was. That was never truly
22 meaningful consultation. And I'm glad that all

1 the agencies have been notified that they will
2 enter into meaningful consultation with Tribes.

3 Just some personal experiences that I
4 had over my time, as being the Tribal President.
5 One of them was, and I don't use the word
6 subsistence, forgive me for that, because I don't
7 call it that, I call it like everybody else, it's
8 our way of life. When this pandemic first
9 started, we saw the effects of the shortage of
10 meats and other things in our local store. So, I
11 immediately started reaching out to different
12 agencies, the first ones was State of Alaska Fish
13 and Game. They said, absolutely not.

14 And I reached out to District Ranger,
15 and he said he didn't have the power, so, he -- I
16 went to the Regional Forester in Juneau and he
17 said, it definitely will help you, so, I talked to
18 their subsistence person, I believe it was, and he
19 passed me on to somebody in Anchorage, another
20 forester up there, and went to the Federal
21 Subsistence Board. Went from there -- it went to
22 -- after four days of meetings with the Federal

1 Subsistence Board, it went to DOI. And DOI sent
2 it back down to our District Ranger, as you just
3 heard (phonetic). And he was notified to make it
4 happen. So, of course, he had to notify State
5 Agency, Agency called the Mass Care Unit. At that
6 time, they said they called Kake about the
7 shortage of meat and the other things in their
8 store. Of course, I asked around town, our town
9 is so small, and they called, and nobody has ever
10 got a call from them. So, I called the District
11 Ranger back, and he referred -- I told him, you
12 know, that wasn't true. And he said, well, hold
13 on, I'll get ahold of Federal Subsistence Board,
14 and sure enough, the next day I got a call saying
15 they're meeting. So, I immediately dialed in, and
16 when it came -- there were three special action
17 requests at that time, one from Kake, and two from
18 the Interior.

19 And when it came to Kake's Special
20 Action Request, I asked to speak, and I told them
21 what was going on, how important that this fresh
22 meat was to our people, how we needed to best

1 nutrition we could provide for them. And
2 thankfully, they sent it back down to our District
3 Ranger in Petersburg, and we talked, and they
4 asked -- he asked me how many moose and how many
5 deer I was thinking about? And I said, well, I
6 don't want to go overboard, so, let's start with
7 two moose and five deer.

8 So, they gave us two hunts, 30 days a
9 piece, and we got the 2 moose and five deer,
10 within the 30 days. So, we processed the moose,
11 we had people that would process it, and we handed
12 it out to the community. Fortunately, at that
13 time, it was getting close to deer hunting season,
14 so we didn't use the second moose -- our moose and
15 deer hunt. Then, we learned that the State of
16 Alaska was suing the Federal Subsistence Board.
17 My name was mentioned in that complaint, as well
18 as the Organized Village of Kake. So, I came back
19 to the Council, I said, since they named me and
20 the Organized Village of Kake, I want to sue,
21 bring suit against the State of Alaska, in support
22 of the Federal Subsistence Board.

1 And I don't know how long it took, but
2 we -- the Judge on the case, five days with the
3 Federal Subsistence Board, as well as the
4 Organized Village of Kake. One of the most
5 important things I took out of that was the Judge
6 recognized us as a Federally Recognized Tribe,
7 with jurisdiction over our Tribal citizens and
8 also our hunting and fishing rights.

9 Now, if anyone can recognize that, then
10 so can the State and Federal Government recognize
11 our inherent rights to our hunting and fishing
12 rights because, right now, if you look in the
13 stores all over the United States, there are
14 shortages, again, going on. We go out to our
15 local store here, there is hardly any meat.
16 There's hardly any produce. There's hardly any
17 dairy products. Now, we're trying to rectify that
18 by having community gardens and people having
19 their own gardens, for the produce part. There is
20 not a heck of a lot we can do about the milk and
21 dairy products. Maybe we'll buy some chickens and
22 start our own egg laying business here.

1 But we do have the resources around us
2 to sustain us in the time of shortage and -- or
3 our meat anyway. And I'd like to go down to the
4 climate change. We've seen that over the, I don't
5 know, 20 years. We watched the climate change,
6 and we've had to adjust our hunting and fishing to
7 accommodate it. And then within the last three or
8 four years, we've seen less and less fish
9 returning. And we had to travel further. We had
10 to fish in different areas that we never fished
11 before. The water temperature, I think, at the
12 highest, this last summer, was 55 degrees out in
13 front of us. Usually, it's 40 to 42 degrees,
14 year-round.

15 So, we hardly saw any of the wild fish
16 return. We have a hatchery here. They had a good
17 return, compared to the year before, when there
18 was hardly anything. But we don't -- our people,
19 and we're fortunate to have a hatchery, I'm not
20 knocking it, but our people are used to eating
21 wild salmon. And that's, you know, that's the way
22 we are, okay, and Federal agency better cooperate

1 with Alaska Native Tribes. And we've been through
2 this time and time again, for decades, that we
3 have agencies come to us, and like I said earlier,
4 it wasn't under the guise of meaningful
5 consultation. It was more like a listening
6 session. We've complained. We would bring up our
7 concerns. And when in the meeting with guns, they
8 walked away, and we never heard nothing from them.
9 We didn't see no change, and that was with the
10 State and Federal Government.

11 So, I've been very -- I can't think of
12 the word, but I just don't trust the Federal and
13 the State Government. And it's from that
14 consultation they called it, it was from that
15 because we never were taken seriously. And I'm
16 glad the Biden administration has finally directed
17 you guys to come into meaningful consultation with
18 the Tribes.

19 And the third one out of the State
20 Management Regime affects implementation of
21 Federal policies in rural Alaska. Number one, and
22 you guys probably all know this, when you look at

1 the pie chart of the resources in the State of
2 Alaska, the commercial sportfishermen, I think
3 there was another one, I can't remember which it
4 was, but the Alaska Natives got one percent of the
5 pie. And when we do go out and catch our fish or
6 hunt our moose and deer, if we catch one fish over
7 the limit, it's a \$220 fine. Now, we're just
8 trying to feed ourselves.

9 In the areas that we fish for most of
10 our Sockeye and Coho, it's very limited. It's
11 because they're far away. It takes me about an
12 hour and a half run on by a big, big cabin
13 cruiser, and I cruise that over 30 miles an hour,
14 if I -- but I usually cruise at 24 miles an hour.
15 And we have to cross a very challenging sound out
16 there. It's called Katmai, Lower Katmai Creek,
17 out there. And it's over 35 miles across.
18 Sometimes, that weather will just pick up in a
19 minute. And I've done this all my life, even
20 before I had my bigger boat. I would cross the
21 Katmai on my 16-foot skip, and I had got caught in
22 some terrible weather out there.

1 So, the criminalization of us for
2 practicing our way of life by the State Agencies
3 has really hurt us. It really hurts our
4 community. Number one, we don't waste anything.
5 We share what we catch with family, extended
6 family, with our community. We share, and that's
7 the most important part about our custom and
8 tradition. We share our catch with the less
9 fortunate, the elders, the single mothers, and
10 other people that can't afford to go out. There's
11 very few of us that can afford to do it anymore.
12 So, the criminalization of us practicing our way
13 of life, that goes on our record. And if we throw
14 it back, they can get us for wanton waste. So,
15 we're kind of caught on that catch-22 situation.

16 How does the Federal Subsistence Board
17 and Federal Subsistence Program be changed to
18 better accommodate Alaska Natives? They can have
19 more Alaska Natives on that Board. The last time
20 I was in front of -- or I called in, there was
21 more Federal Agencies, there was State Agencies,
22 there, and I think there was two Natives on there.

1 So, we need to have more Natives on that because
2 that -- it would affect the main opinion
3 (phonetic). That's one way.

4 And then I'll move on, so I can let
5 everybody else speak. What difficulties have you
6 experienced in access and subsistent resources?
7 Like I said before, we're -- it's getting to the
8 point where we made one trip last year for Sockeye
9 and Coho. There was just a limited amount of fish
10 out there. So, being we were taught not to take
11 too much, so, we've seen the lack of fish out
12 there, so we said, okay, we're going to make just
13 one trip, and we got what we needed, and we went
14 home. We came home, and we did that a couple
15 times, one for Sockeye and one for Coho. Luckily,
16 we got enough for our families, and our friends,
17 and the elders.

18 I think the DOI must uphold its legal
19 obligation of the Federal trust and responsibility
20 to maintain the unique and Federal role and
21 protecting Native People and relationships with
22 Tribes, that it does not have with the State. The

1 memorandum and agreement between DOI and the
2 Federal Subsistence Board in the State of Alaska
3 must include Tribal consultations be required to
4 be made publicly viewable. DOI must develop
5 policy identifying the state's limited role and
6 include it in the Federal Subsistent Management.

7 And this one I think is the most
8 important one, move the Office of Subsistence
9 Management from within the U.S. Fish and Wildlife
10 Service to secretarial level within the Department
11 of the Interior and then to remain located in
12 Alaska. We request that the Office of Subsistence
13 Management be made to the -- on the economists'
14 office within the DOI. Amend the select process
15 of Federal Subsistent Management of Program Region
16 of Aggregate Councils, the RAC, to require Tribal
17 input and participate in -- complete the necessary
18 -- to protect their appointments. DOI and the USA
19 should fill the vacant seats on the RAC.

20 Extend Tribal representation on the
21 Federal Subsistence Board, I covered that already,
22 by regulation and expand the number of staff

1 available to support Tribal representation.
2 Recognize and legally define Tribal hunting,
3 fishing, and gathering rights in the Federal law
4 and including jurisdiction authority for Alaska
5 Native Management for hunting and ANCSA and Native
6 allotment land.

7 Implementation of Title IV of IFEEA and
8 Section 809 of ANILCA ensure Tribal
9 self-government of subsistence management and
10 Federal Conservation Units within their
11 traditional territories. Amend Title VIII in
12 ANILCA to create clear priorities for Alaska
13 Native People to hunt, fish, and gather. Enforce
14 the -- enforce or create laws to allow Alaska
15 Native Tribes and secondary ANCs the right of
16 first refusal when Federal Government is disposing
17 of land and resources.

18 And just to wrap up, we started working
19 with ANCs, the Tribe, on the same theme, called
20 Being Good Relatives. We've been working together
21 because we all serve the same people, and we want
22 to leave something better for our grandchildren.

1 I think this was the last point I want to make.
2 We never relinquished our ancestral rights to
3 hunt, fish, and harvest, and gather. So, at this
4 time, I'd like to end my comments and thank you
5 all for your time and patience. Thank you.

6 MR. NEWLAND: Thank you, President
7 Jackson, and I would encourage you to submit that
8 in writing, as well, to the Department. Just to
9 -- we have been asked by a number of folks whether
10 a report and recordings of these consultations
11 will be made available. We do, here at the
12 Department of the Interior, record our
13 consultations and share that information, as well
14 as our follow up reports, on our consultation.gov
15 website. So, Mr. Hartford, I know you've been
16 patiently waiting. I'm happy to turn it back over
17 to you.

18 MR. HARTFORD: Yes, thank you very much,
19 Assistant Secretary. And our Vice President,
20 Trixie Bennett, should be on now, on the phone, if
21 she could --

22 MR. NEWLAND: Oh.

1 MR. HARTFORD: -- take the mic.

2 MR. NEWLAND: Okay. Ms. Bennett, you
3 can unmute your phone by pressing *6.

4 MS. BENNETT: Good afternoon. Am I
5 unmuted?

6 MR. NEWLAND: You betcha.

7 MS. BENNETT: All right. Trixie Bennett
8 (Speaks in Native language). I said I am Trixie
9 Bennett. I'm a Slinket (phonetic) Raven from
10 Wrangell, Alaska. I'm a child of the Cutchuti
11 Clan, a clan from the Slinket Nation (phonetic),
12 at the mouth of the Stikine River. I'm calling in
13 from Ketchikan, the traditional homelands of the
14 Slinket Tan Tequan and the San Jaquan, also, and
15 -- known as Ketchikan, Alaska, the fishing capitol
16 of the world, where our people from all over the
17 world have come from -- for salmon, where my
18 people have come to get salmon since time
19 memorial.

20 I chair up the Our Way of Life Committee
21 for the Tribe, and it's my job and my honor to
22 defend our way of life, to stand up for our -- all

1 our relatives that live on Slinketani (phonetic).
2 I also come from a commercial fishing family, from
3 Wrangell, and I participate in commercial
4 fisheries, myself. My grandparents commercial
5 fished and we all subsistent fish. I've seen
6 firsthand the decline in the wild salmon. When I
7 was young, the creeks around Wrangell and
8 Ketchikan were full of wild salmon, year after
9 year, the Herring Pogba Tongass narrows, and the
10 King Salmon were plentiful, and they were huge.

11 My great-grandfather piloted Stikine
12 River riverboats, and those boats were piled high
13 with fish and game. King Salmon Derby fish
14 winners were in the excess of 100 pounds. Now,
15 well, there are no King Salmon Derbies. It's hard
16 to tell, sometimes, that salmon are in trouble
17 because of the success of some hatcheries, but
18 wild salmon are in trouble. In 2017, the Chinook
19 Salmon on the Unuk were declared a stock of
20 concern, and the Unuk River will again have
21 declined significantly, too.

22 I'm the Vice President of the Ketchikan

1 Indian Community. I would like to thank you for
2 taking time out of your busy schedules to listen
3 to the concerns that Alaska Native Tribes have
4 regarding the harvest of our traditional foods.
5 While I can speak on a number of different matters
6 that relate to Tribal Food Sovereignty, I would
7 like to highlight a few of the things that our
8 Tribe is particularly concerned with.

9 One of the major impediments for our
10 Tribal Citizens to have access to traditional
11 foods in our area is our land being designated as
12 a non-rural territory. As it stands with current
13 regulations, our Ketchikan Indian Community Tribal
14 Citizens have no access to one of our most
15 culturally significant resources, the Eulachon,
16 sorry, the Eulachon, or most people in our area
17 would call it the Eulachon. As it currently
18 stands, no residents of Ketchikan can harvest
19 Eulachon in Federal waters, as we are classified
20 as non-rural. However, our Tribal Brothers and
21 Sisters in Saxman have met with Katleh (phonetic).
22 They have access to these resources, as their

1 communities are classified as rural.

2 We find that the criteria for making
3 Ketchikan non- rural arbitrary and unnecessary, to
4 say the least. The Ketchikan Indian Community is
5 actively advocating for the State of Alaska,
6 through the Board of Fisheries, to allow our
7 residents to harvest small quantities of Eulachon,
8 in the state managed waters, so that our Tribal
9 Citizens can feel connected to their traditional
10 lands, seas, and traditional foods, our way of
11 life.

12 One aspect that may come -- become an
13 issue is the development of the Transboundary
14 Mines and Watersheds near the Ketchikan area,
15 especially the Unuk, the Chinook. It is prevalent
16 in the data that King Salmon populations in the
17 Unuk River have been at a low, low, unsustainable
18 numbers for years now. It is prevalent in the
19 catch records for all user groups, and it is
20 disproportionately negatively the subsistent
21 seasons of Ketchikan area. We feel that both the
22 State of Alaska and the United States Federal

1 Government needs to take a stronger stand to D.C.
2 (phonetic) and hold them to only the highest of
3 environmental standards, such that our traditional
4 foods have the best opportunity to be sustainable.
5 We understand that there are other factors in
6 place that impact the salmon abundance, such as
7 overfishing, climate change, increased predation,
8 and apparent competition from non-wild stocks, but
9 we cannot blatantly allow ticking time bombs to
10 sit at these headwaters of these ecologically
11 important river heat streams.

12 As an Indigenous Person, I hold myself
13 to standards of environmental stewardship to
14 protect our lands and our way of life. I do not
15 feel it is a major ask for representatives of the
16 state and the United States to come to something
17 close to that, as well, especially given the
18 people -- given that people's livelihoods are on
19 the line. Finally, I would like to leave you with
20 a topic that is usually brought up a lot, but it
21 is especially important to our Community of
22 Ketchikan, and that's climate change. Everyone

1 here in Ketchikan has a different perspective on
2 how things used to be, based on how old they are,
3 and many of the information that we, time and time
4 again, try to present to our managers is our
5 traditional ecological knowledge, or TEK for
6 short. We are seeing the weather patterns are
7 changing and becoming more extreme here. We see
8 that our salmon are getting smaller. We see that
9 the runtime for salmon areas are starting to
10 shift. And we see that our shellfish on our
11 beaches are experiencing major die offs. This is
12 no coincidence that human induced climate change
13 is starting to take hold of our small community,
14 and, again, it is disproportionately negatively
15 impacting our Tribal Citizens.

16 Our Tribe is actively working on climate
17 adaptation planning to help address some of these
18 issues, on the local level, but without real
19 change on the State and Federal Level, we will
20 always have to prepare for worse things to come,
21 in regards to our traditional foods and way of
22 life. I hope that one day that my

1 great-great-grandchildren can enjoy the same
2 cultures and connections to our lands and our
3 foods that I do today, as my ancestors before me.
4 It is important to Alaska Natives that have come
5 before us, and it is our duty to protect these
6 lands, Slinketani, for many generations to come.
7 Again, I would like to thank you for your time,
8 and seriously listening to our thoughts and
9 concerns, and I look forward to further
10 consultation in the future. (Speaks in Native
11 language).

12 MR. NEWLAND: Yeah.

13 MS. BENNETT: Thank you all for
14 listening. (Speaks in Native language). Thank
15 you for listening.

16 MR. NEWLAND: You bet. Thank you so
17 much, Vice President Bennett. I appreciate the
18 points you've raised, in particularly highlighting
19 the consequence of the rural designation priority
20 and how that affects Native People in Alaska
21 trying to exercise -- you know, practice
22 traditional life ways. So, thank you for that.

1 Our next speaker --

2 MS. BENNETT: Thank you.

3 MR. NEWLAND: Yeah. Our next speaker we
4 have is Silas Galbreath, and, after that, I don't
5 see any additional hands raised. I see --

6 MR. GALBREATH: Good afternoon,
7 everyone.

8 MR. NEWLAND: Duke Lord, I see you on
9 screen. So, we'll come to you next, after Silas.
10 Thank you.

11 MR. GALBREATH: Good afternoon,
12 everyone. My name is Silas Tikaan Galbreath. I
13 am a Tribal Member of the Mendasu (phonetic)
14 Traditional Council, and I am a Technical
15 Assistant Specialist for the Intertribal
16 Agriculture Council. I want to take this
17 opportunity just to highlight a few of the policy
18 priorities that would help ensure the protection
19 of our traditional ways of living.

20 First, it would be the permanent and
21 guaranteed funding should be provided annually for
22 the Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission,

1 Kuskokwim River Intertribal Fish Commission, the
2 Yukon River Intertribal Fish Commission, the
3 Alaska Native Marine Mammal Co-Management
4 Organizations. This would be similar to the funds
5 permanently allocated to the Chugach Regional
6 Resource Commission and any permanent additional
7 funding should be made available through the BIA
8 for continued support for Tribal Subsistence
9 Programs.

10 We need to prohibit using land and water
11 conservation funds to buy Native Lands, unless it
12 is to return to Tribal Governments or ANCSA
13 ownership. We need to ensure Tribes are treated
14 as sovereigns in the application for the
15 Pittman-Robertson Conservation Funds and the
16 Dingell-Johnson Conservation Funds.

17 We need to change the definition of
18 Indian Country to be inclusive of Native-owned
19 lands in Alaska, and California, and other states,
20 where -- that were appropriated, where we
21 appropriate, and we need to implement the DOI
22 Secretary Order 3342, Identifying Opportunities

1 for Cooperative and Collaborative Partnerships
2 with Federally Recognized Tribes in the management
3 of Federal Lands and Resources.

4 And finally, I think it is imperative
5 that we require all our senior advisors, Alaska
6 leadership positions, and Cabinet members to take
7 racial equity training and Alaska Native
8 Governance and Protocols Training, so that they
9 understand the population and the communities that
10 they are working with and approach the
11 conversations appropriately. Thank you for the
12 time and the opportunity to speak. I look forward
13 to hearing the other comments today.

14 MR. NEWLAND: Thank you so much, Silas.
15 I appreciate that. And also, thank you for just
16 raising the issue of LWCF Funding and -- as well
17 as co-management. Those are areas that we are
18 focusing on, just generally, and how to improve
19 our use of the Land and Water Conservation Fund,
20 connect it to Tribally led Conservation
21 Initiatives, and make sure that we are turning our
22 policies on co-stewardship into action. So, thank

1 you. Next up, I have Duke Lord in the speaker
2 que, followed by Donna Renard and Karen
3 Pletnikoff.

4 MR. LORD: Hello, hello, can you guys
5 hear me?

6 MR. NEWLAND: Yes.

7 MR. LORD: This is Duke. All right,
8 thank you. (Speaks in Native language) to Bryan
9 and Deborah, how they're kind of -- been the wind
10 beneath my wings for the past year. I'm a
11 fisherman, and trapper, and hunter, and provider
12 for provinces here in Yunana, for most of my life,
13 and things are getting more difficult. This
14 government-to-government thing has -- was -- been
15 introduced to me, to us, through the military, of
16 all people. They came to our village and started
17 participating between Clear, Lawson, and
18 Wainwright, and it's been pretty good,
19 face-to-face with them in our Hall. And I think
20 they moved around to the -- some other villages.
21 I think I went to Northway or something like that,
22 the -- it's part of the practice, you know, but

1 that makes you understand how it makes exchange
2 go.

3 But -- and then, just recently, we had
4 the, and with the North Pacific Fisheries, on the
5 computer, on the Zoom, and that was helping out.
6 And they had some paperwork for us to try to
7 follow the instructions on how to get -- how to
8 move forward and get things done. And that's
9 important for us Village People to learn to pick
10 up these little things like this. So, computers
11 get me nervous right now, but anyway.

12 I just wanted to let you guys know that,
13 and I wanted to echo everything that Faye Ewan --
14 she -- what she said was good, and especially when
15 she was talking about -- and that's getting out to
16 a lot of us. I'm 65 now, so, I guess I got to be
17 an elder, but a lot of us -- a lot of the younger
18 ones are not picking up what she's talking about,
19 about knowing -- telling you what the future's
20 going to be, by reading those signs, those Indians
21 or Eskimo Indian signs, or, you know, whatever we
22 do up here. It's very important.

1 My mother and father were both -- both
2 have no education. They raised us. They raised
3 off of the land in hunting and fishing, and then
4 whatever little job that they could take for
5 subsistence. But -- and they, and I kick myself
6 in the butt for not picking up on stuff that they
7 were trying to teach me because they were the ones
8 that should have been in there, helping with the
9 laws that were implemented on us in the '60s, '60s
10 and '70s.

11 Coming to that, I'm getting to -- back
12 in 1989, I was on a trapline, for the whole
13 winter, and I got a call from home. They said
14 come in there because I was one of the Tribal
15 Council. We've got something important. So, I
16 packed up most of my stuff in Kivalina, and it was
17 a Lieutenant Chief wanted me to go out to
18 Washington, D.C. to meet a Subsistence
19 Representative with the crew. The State Crew went
20 out, and everybody was going out because they were
21 going to try to designate Yunana, and so, you
22 know, like a few of the major villages that were

1 influenced by, I don't know how to say it, by the
2 Whites. But anyway, so, I went out there and it
3 was a big thing. One day, I was in the trapline,
4 the next day I was in D.C.

5 But I went, we went, and we did like
6 they used to back then, they lobbied, lobbied the
7 Senators and Congressmen, and I told them that in
8 Yunana we did not land on Parks Highway or Alaska
9 Railroad. Parks Highway and Alaska Railroad
10 landed on us. So, we're going to maintain our
11 subsistence, and if you guys do take that away
12 from us, you might as well just ship a bunch of
13 those boxes out on the streets of D.C., but just
14 back to Yunana, because that is where we're going
15 to live. So, thank God that they voted it down.
16 They didn't urbanize us.

17 So, that, and back to what Faye said
18 about the animal stock. To all you people out
19 there, treasure your people, your elders, or
20 whatever, or there's -- if there's a younger one
21 out there that's -- practices off the land,
22 chooses to live that little poorer life,

1 livelihood, to maintain the Village Status,
2 treasure them because they -- they're getting
3 fewer and fewer, those kind of people around, and
4 I -- we lose them all the time in Yunana, and I
5 kick myself, and I'm sad to see them go because
6 they're -- there's no replacing them. And thank
7 you guys very much. (Speaks in Native language).

8 MR. NEWLAND: Thank you so much for
9 taking time to share with us today, Duke. I
10 really appreciate it. Our next speaker will be
11 Donna Renard.

12 MS. RENARD: Good afternoon. My name is
13 Donna Renard. I'm from the Native Village of
14 Tazlina, and I am the Village Elder. I'm also the
15 Eco-Coordinator (phonetic) for the Native Village
16 of Tazlina. I have seen a lot of changes with
17 subsistence regulations throughout the years,
18 since the 1980s, and they're all based on
19 proposals out from outside parties. You know, the
20 State has been -- you know, changes to the
21 subsistence law or regulations, so that I've just
22 seen -- I've just seen it chipped away. It's been

1 changed over, and over, and over again, and these
2 are based on proposals from other groups, not from
3 the Subsistence or Indigenous People.

4 And I'm from the Ahtna Region, and we're
5 constantly having to fight for our subsistence
6 rights because of outsiders who submit proposals
7 to manipulate the subsistence law to work for
8 them. A lot of them are sports hunters. This is
9 our avenue, our opportunities to be able to
10 continue our people's existence, through
11 practicing our customary and traditional way of
12 life. And we've been doing this for over 10,000
13 years. And we have outsiders coming in with these
14 proposals only for personal gain or for just a
15 small group. I've watched this.

16 You know, I -- my grandfather, the late
17 Frank Stickwan had shared with me, we were sitting
18 in Fish Camp in the 1970s and we were talking, he
19 was talking to me, I was a teenager then, and he
20 told me that I needed to watch the State and I
21 needed to watch the, well, the agencies, State and
22 Federal. They will take your right away from you,

1 your hunting, your fishing away from you, a little
2 bit at a time, so subtly that I would not be able
3 to notice it, until it was all gone. My
4 grandfather was born in 1902. My grandfather
5 spoke broken English. He didn't have a college
6 education, like a lot of us here. But he was able
7 to foresee what is happening today, 50 years ago.

8 I have seen our subsistence regulations
9 diminish to where we are now, to where the animals
10 are now the natural resources. Everything's being
11 taken away, not just from us, as a people, but
12 from our animals, their existence. On -- you
13 know, I really have a problem with sports hunters.
14 I wish I could -- I wish I could -- you know, I
15 want to say I don't want any sports hunting here
16 in our region, period, that this region just
17 remain as a subsistence region to provide for our
18 families, especially the local Indigenous People.
19 The definition's here, too. Alaska Native, Alaska
20 Native is a person that was born here.

21 I am an Indigenous Person from here. I
22 existed tens of thousands of years ago, through my

1 bloodline. The diet I eat right now, and the diet
2 that all of us Ahtna, Ahtna People, eat right now,
3 we've been eating for a generation because every
4 generation was eating to give birth to another
5 generation. So, moose isn't something that, oh,
6 I've been eating moose for 20 years, I've been
7 eating moose for 60 years. No, my mother ate
8 moose, and my grandmother ate moose before she had
9 my mother. It goes back generation by -- to
10 generation, way back. Moose, our diet's been in
11 our people's bloodline for 10,000 years. This is
12 something that we crave because this is a part of
13 us. Fish, same way. Every food that we ate for
14 tens of thousands of years is passed down through
15 our bloodline to those babies today, and we crave
16 it. That's why we crave it. It's not a delicacy
17 to us. It's something we need for our mental,
18 spiritual, and physical sustenance, so that we can
19 sustain and exist as a people.

20 Subsistence, subsistence for us has no
21 season. We know what to take. We know how much
22 to take. We know, you know, we know how to

1 respect it, too, so that we can have it for later.
2 Sports hunters, they -- we have no hunting season,
3 but sports hunters do. "Oh, it's hunting season."
4 We don't look at that, going out and harvesting
5 like that. We hunt because we need to live. And
6 if this continues, our existence, we're a dying
7 people. And can State live with that? I'm sure
8 they could.

9 I'd like to just touch on climate
10 change, river erosions, bodies of water that were
11 on land. Lakes, they're drying up. There's a lot
12 of, you know, vegetation and, you know, they're
13 suffering. Animals are suffering for their food.
14 Foods are being strangulated from overgrowth of
15 other invasive plants. Our permafrost is melted.
16 It's melting. A long time ago, our people used to
17 be able to, right there by the river, dig a hole,
18 put our fish in there, and let it age for a day or
19 two because it was nice and cold. We can't do
20 that no more, without fear of spoiling. So, we
21 can't even prepare and age our food to the point
22 until it's ready to process. Our dried fish now,

1 I notice, because we can't do the processing that
2 we are traditionally taught, our fish is a little
3 bit -- a lot drier, bone dry, not moist and oily.
4 So, there are extreme impacts from climate change
5 that I have -- that I have seen over the years.

6 I'd just like to thank you for taking
7 this time to allowing us to share our stories, and
8 I don't -- I'd like to see my own people manage
9 their own -- their own hunting grounds, and I
10 really don't want -- you know, it may be
11 inevitable, but I'm tired of sport hunters.
12 They're out there for a trophy. In fact, I know
13 this because sometimes we get -- we get meat that
14 somebody shot, and you -- I know it's because
15 they're out there, trophy hunting, somewhere. And
16 let them go into the mountains, let them pay the
17 \$10,000, \$20,000, \$30,000 to go wherever, but
18 let's not have them come in here because we are
19 truly subsistence, and even though we're on the
20 road system, we're the Indigenous People here.
21 And I'm tired of being violated and feeling like
22 my home is being desecrated. That's all I have to

1 say. Thank you very much for your time.

2 MR. NEWLAND: Donna (Speaks in Native
3 language). Thank you so much for taking time to
4 share with us today, and it's evident how
5 passionate and deeply engrained your views are and
6 where your comments come from. And I -- I'm very
7 grateful that you've shared that with us today. I
8 do want to remind folks that we had a limited time
9 where we could make sure that we had key
10 policymakers from all three Cabinet Agencies
11 available. We have 30 minutes -- 20 minutes left
12 in the scheduled consultation, but I think we can
13 stay on for 30 minutes and hear from the speakers
14 who are in the que already. I have Karen
15 Pletnikoff, Shawaan Jackson-Gamble, Bruce Ervin,
16 and Brooke Woods, as our final speakers for today.
17 So, at this time, we'll hear from Karen.

18 MS. PLETNIKOFF: Thank you, Bryan. Good
19 afternoon and thank you for this opportunity. I'm
20 Karen Pletnikoff. I'm the Environment and Safety
21 Program Administrator at the Aleutian Pribilof
22 Islands Association, the Consortium of the Ununga

1 (phonetic) Tribes. And please ask for any
2 clarifications.

3 Alaska's two-part system of subsistence
4 management leaves our Tribes in the middle and is
5 failing to meet our needs. The State of Alaska's
6 failure to acknowledge Alaska's Tribes mean they
7 cannot communicate with us directly, and they
8 can't fulfill our -- they can't understand our
9 needs, and they can't meet the Federal trust
10 responsibility and all the other Federal
11 regulations, commitments, and legal precedence's
12 that they're entrusted to accomplish when taking
13 primacy.

14 The Federal Government takes back
15 primacy in these situations for many single act
16 violations or failures, such as failing to meet
17 the Clean Water Act. But this is a much larger
18 issue for Alaska Natives and deserves this level
19 of consideration until the state can recognize and
20 consult directly with our Tribes. And this
21 shouldn't be just for subsistence management, but
22 for all the funds that are for the benefit of

1 Alaska's Tribal Citizens, but through the State's
2 agencies, while they fail to recognize us as those
3 sovereign entities.

4 And as others have addressed, we can see
5 the direct impacts of this, with the amount of
6 enforcement for one percent of the harvest, that
7 subsistence is, as a clear example of the
8 inequitable and punitive actions from staff that
9 are not embodying these responsibilities. In
10 fact, the entire DOE has a department level role
11 to protect the welfare and interests of Alaska
12 Natives from harm caused by other Federal actions,
13 with the BIA having specific roles to ensure our
14 sustainability. And to fulfill this role, DOI
15 needs to take supportive stance on behalf of
16 Alaska Natives they hold the trust for,
17 particularly with those departments and their
18 agencies, whose actions directly impact us. And I
19 really want to thank some of those agencies who
20 are on the call today for being here and hearing
21 these concerns that you hold direct responsibility
22 for.

1 Similarly to how EPA reviews and
2 regulates other agencies, we need the BIA to take
3 positions reflective of their mission to uphold
4 that responsibility and to recognize our priority
5 as the original users and stewards. And one of
6 the best ways to do that is through co-management
7 partnerships that are essential to meeting our
8 needs under the pressure of fast and unprecedented
9 resource change. But these collaborations are
10 frequently at the discretion of the local unit,
11 inconsistent in agency commitment that changes all
12 the time, and chronically underfunded with
13 arbitrary allocations.

14 Codifying these federally required
15 relationships will improve our outcomes, provide
16 equity between the regions, the species, the
17 agencies, and prevent these partnerships from
18 being low-priority budget remnants that ebb and
19 flow with the changing bureaucracies. This --
20 these are some of the maybe more overarching
21 approaches that you guys could consider taking to
22 try and make some long-lasting fundamental change

1 to those ongoing important aspects of how these
2 impact our lives in a real-time basis.

3 And I just want to emphasize, leave you
4 with the emphasize -- the emphasis that this
5 changing COVID situation, the supply chain issues
6 that you, yourself, are experiencing in our larger
7 communities, are only exacerbated in our smallest
8 towns. And we -- we need these actions. We need
9 this response in a timely manner, that has this
10 lasting impact and fundamentally changes some of
11 our management approaches that allows to have the
12 flexibility we need in a rapidly changing
13 environment, so we're not constantly doing
14 emergency action on something that's -- is
15 fundamental to our survival and sustainability and
16 subsistence. Thanks so much.

17 MR. NEWLAND: Thank you, Karen, and
18 thanks for sharing your views today. I'm going to
19 move quickly onto our next speakers. Our next one
20 is Shawaan Jackson-Gamble, and then Bruce Ervin,
21 followed by Brooke Woods.

22 MR. JACKSON-GAMBLE: Thank you. Can you

1 hear me okay?

2 MR. NEWLAND: Yes.

3 MR. JACKSON-GAMBLE: Good afternoon,
4 everyone, and thank you, everyone, for attending
5 this important consultation. (Speaks in Native
6 language). My Tlingit name is Ch'aak'ti, which
7 translates to Watchman of Hamilton Bay, and I
8 belong to the Tsaagweidi People, Killer Wale
9 People of Kake. I'm the child of the Kiksudi
10 (phonetic) and the grandchild of the Kogwantan
11 (phonetic) and the Kah'khachuti (phonetic). I'm
12 currently the Indigenous Stewardship Fellow for
13 First Alaskans Institute, where I work alongside
14 the Protecting Our Ways of Life Working Group.
15 But I'm also a lifetime harvester of our
16 traditional foods, but I'm also giving this
17 testimony on behalf of myself today.

18 I'm testifying to you today to tell you
19 the importance of our ways of life, otherwise
20 known as subsistence foods, to Alaska Native
21 People, but also the changes that we are seeing
22 from climate change. So, in my short lifetime,

1 I've seen the glaciers that are on our
2 mountaintops get smaller and smaller each year,
3 and those are vital for the Sockeye and other
4 salmon runs each year. I remember my grandpa
5 showing me when I was younger to always pay
6 attention to the size of the glacier that's above
7 Falls Lake, where we usually run for Sockeye every
8 year, around the Kake area, and once that's gone
9 that we should start to get worried, and, you
10 know, every year that glacier keeps getting
11 smaller and smaller.

12 We're seeing a lot smaller runs of
13 salmon each year, across the whole State of
14 Alaska. And I think that more stream restoration
15 projects need to happen throughout Alaska. We're
16 already experiencing climate change at an alarming
17 rate, and it's really a matter of time how well
18 we're prepared for when climate change really
19 starts to hit us by creating more restoration
20 projects that help heal our lands, waters, and
21 resources.

22 I've participated as a Crew Leader with

1 the Keex' Kwaan Community Forest Partnership and
2 have had about 10 years of field experience in the
3 natural resources field. And I've seen how
4 restoration projects can completely change the
5 health of stream by creating a better pool to
6 riffle ratio, meaning that the stream restoration,
7 it creates more of a -- pools and resting areas
8 for the resident fish, as well as the salmon that
9 come back every year, so that it kind of gets rid
10 of the riffles or the fast-moving water. I think
11 more programs need to be created through the USDA,
12 like the Keex' Kwaan Community Forest Partnership
13 and the Hoonah Native Forest Partnership, to start
14 the co-management process for Tribes.

15 When we're doing culvert surveys, the
16 first year of the Keex' Kwaan Community Forest
17 Partnership, some of the U.S. Forest Service
18 culverts, where they had them marked or were often
19 times half a mile off, on the maps that we used,
20 and when we did our surveys, we were within
21 centimeters, and often times a couple of meters of
22 how far off we were from where the culverts were

1 located. But that just shows how Tribes have the
2 capability of conducting our own surveys and
3 forming data sovereignty for Tribes.

4 One action that needs to happen is a MOA
5 drafted between the Federal Subsistence Board and
6 all Alaska Native Tribes and angst the
7 corporations to allow Tribes and corporations to
8 conduct data for the Federal Subsistence Board,
9 rather than the Federal Subsistence Board relying
10 solely on the data provided by the Alaska
11 Department of Fish and Game. The State of Alaska
12 Management Regime affects the Federal priority for
13 rural residents, tremendously, by just looking at
14 the amount of times the state has took us to court
15 for simply living our ways of life. For example,
16 the most recent Kake -- case between the Organized
17 Village of Kake and the State of Alaska, where the
18 Tribe harvested five deer and two moose, which was
19 distributed to all the Tribal Members and Elders,
20 so, when the store lacked the meat that we needed
21 to survive, and hunger really knows no law.

22 And change really needs to happen

1 immediately because we shouldn't be punished for
2 making sure that our communities are well taken
3 care of, with the foods that have nourished us for
4 thousands of years. There are currently
5 generations of Alaska Native Youth that are
6 missing the opportunity to pass down these
7 traditional ways of life because of the shortage
8 of the fish and the animals returning, due to
9 mismanagement. Something that needs to happen is
10 through the Office of Subsistence Management, be
11 relocated within the Office of the Secretary,
12 ensuring adequate subsistence user and Tribal
13 representation on the Board, and ensuring
14 appropriate appointment of the Regional Advisory
15 Council Members, for also upholding the trust
16 responsibility, for clarifying delegation of
17 authority to Federally Recognized Tribes, also
18 clarifying emergency procedures, and ensuring
19 Regional Advisory Committees from Federal
20 decision-making that affects subsistence.

21 There also needs to be -- create a
22 position that coordinates all the Department

1 Tribal Liaisons across the departments of agencies
2 to help with the structure and also make sure that
3 we -- our voices are heard. There needs to -- we
4 need to restore and streamline and expedite the
5 opportunity of land put into trust in Alaska. The
6 old management system exists in Alaska only
7 because of the promise made to Alaska Natives to
8 protect their way of -- Native way of life, as
9 legislated in ANILCA Title VIII, and the inability
10 of the State of Alaska to comply. It's a failing
11 system. It's given the state undue influence,
12 limiting Alaska Native Leadership and the
13 decision-making authority and criminalizing Alaska
14 Natives' way of life.

15 Accordingly, the state should not be
16 granted the difference or influence of Federal
17 management decisions. Therefore, the DOI must
18 uphold its legal obligation of their Federal trust
19 responsibility to maintain the unique and special
20 role of protecting Alaska Native People and the
21 relationships with Tribes, that it does not have
22 to with states, the -- to have a way between, the

1 DOI and Federal Subsistence Board in the State of
2 Alaska must include Tribal Consultation and be
3 required to be made publicly viewable.

4 These are just a few short-term
5 solutions that tremendously can help the Alaska
6 Native People towards co- management of our lands,
7 waters, and resources because these are our
8 ancestral homelands. They have and always will
9 be. And we always will have a symbiotic
10 relationship with everything around us. My
11 great-grandpa, Peter Duncan, said that the bears
12 and the eagles don't need a permit to hunt and
13 fish, so, why do we need to do something that we
14 have done for thousands of years. I want to
15 appreciate -- say thank you to the Department of
16 the Interior, USDA, NOAA, and OSM for creating
17 these conversations, as I suggest, the start of
18 the relationship building that is well overdue, as
19 this -- to start giving Tribes the sovereignty
20 powers that we have always been asking for. And
21 the future is Indigenous, and I feel like a big
22 change is finally coming for us. (Speaks in

1 Native language) for listening to my testimony
2 today.

3 MR. NEWLAND: Thank you so much,
4 Shawaan, for coming today and sharing your views.
5 I really appreciate that, and I know they are very
6 valuable for all of us on the line, for they're
7 all a bit different, the Federal agencies. Just a
8 reminder that we are coming down to the end of our
9 scheduled consultation session. I saw a few hands
10 go up. After the que, I think, because we're a
11 little bit of -- ahead of schedule on getting
12 through the listed speakers, we can hear from the
13 folks we have in the que, Bruce Ervin and Brooke
14 Woods, and I'd be willing to stay on the line for
15 a few extra minutes to hear from, I apologize, I'm
16 going to try to get your name right, Qunmigu Kacey
17 Hopson and Karen Gillis. But after that, we will
18 not be able to take any additional speakers in
19 this session. I do want to remind folks that we
20 have a written comment period open until February
21 15th. So, with that, Bruce, happy to turn it over
22 to you.

1 MR. ERVIN: Thank you, Bryan. Can you
2 hear me okay?

3 MR. NEWLAND: Yes, sir.

4 MR. ERVIN: (Speaks in Native language).
5 My name is Bruce Ervin. I'm from -- I'm a
6 Northway Tribal Member, and I'm currently Zooming
7 in from Upper Tanana Dena'ina Lands, and to -- I
8 work for Tanana Chief's Conference in the Tribal
9 Resources Stewardship Program. And to start off
10 with question number one, climate change has
11 affected subsistence in many ways. The seasonal
12 patterns of animals, birds, fish, and plants are
13 changing every year. Moose are running later in
14 the season and don't start moving around until the
15 end of moose season, and by then, seasons close,
16 and the Tribes miss out on opportunity to feed
17 their families and communities.

18 Last summer, we experienced for the
19 first time our Chinook and Chum salmon returned
20 and crashed, with no chance for subsistence
21 harvest. Our salmon feeds so many families and
22 communities along the Yukon River. And at the end

1 of the season, many smokehouses, freezers, and
2 hearts were left empty, resulting in future
3 generations losing this ancestral right and
4 connection. I ask that we ensure Tribes have an
5 equal role, authority, and the same
6 decision-making power as the Federal Subsistence
7 Board, the Alaska Board of Game, and the Alaska
8 Board of Fisheries. Alaska needs the stewardship
9 of Alaska Native, and empowering to gather data
10 from the land, water, and air, in all areas of our
11 state.

12 Question two, recommend Tribes be
13 empowered to be stewards of fish and wildlife on
14 Federal Public Lands. Ensure that Tribes be given
15 the authority to issue their own fish and wildlife
16 permits on Federal Public Lands for spiritual,
17 potlach, educational, cultural camp, food
18 security, hunting seasons, emergency and survival,
19 for food supply chain collapse purposes. When
20 first Russians arrived in Alaska, they saw a
21 beautiful land that was thriving, in balance, and
22 so well cared for that they thought no one lived

1 here. The truth, this was and continues to be a
2 reflection of our historical and ancestral
3 stewardship connection and respect for all our
4 land, water, and air relatives. For thousands of
5 generations, we've relied on this powerful
6 relationship, and it ensured their survival.

7 Question three, to be honest, we are not
8 even recognized as Tribal Governments, and this is
9 very disrespectful to our first Alaskans. To have
10 a 63-year-old State Government to enforce
11 genocidal regulations and policies to eradicate
12 (audio skips) is shocking, unbelievable, and
13 nothing has changed. Our future Alaska Native
14 generations are born as ANCSA refugees on their
15 own ancestral lands. The land, water, and air are
16 in our DNA. The dual management system in Alaska
17 is failing, and the proof is in our animals, fish,
18 and birds because they are a reflection of poor
19 management.

20 Question four, Alaska Natives need more
21 help from the Federal Subsistence Board. We need
22 FSB to consult us, and ask us to gather data, and

1 to stop looking towards the state for answers.
2 The state was given a chance already, and they've
3 failed. We need more Tribal seats on the Federal
4 Subsistence Board.

5 Question five, during the start of
6 COVID, we were denied a chance to buy moose for
7 our Tribes from the State of Alaska. We went the
8 Federal route, and that ended in a lawsuit from
9 the state suing the FSB for fulfilling their
10 obligations. This is not acceptable, and change
11 needs to happen now. Alaska Natives, Tribes, and
12 future generations deserve better. Criminalizing
13 our Alaska Natives needs to stop, moving forward
14 with consultation and empowering Tribes to reclaim
15 their roles as stewards and guardians of the land,
16 water, and air. You know, it's hard to say, but,
17 it's really sad, but at this very moment, we're
18 fighting for our customary and traditional use
19 area on the Taylor Highway. Upper Tanana
20 residents from Taupe, North Bay, Tetlin, Eagle
21 (phonetic), Tanner Cross (phonetic), Healy Lake
22 are opposing the Dennison Headwaters RRCS Project.

1 This is a sanctuary for our Native and
2 Non-Native rural residents, who know how important
3 the area is, and they all share this natural and
4 renewable resource. To take away this
5 multigenerational area, away from the local 1,985
6 plus residents and selling it to 35, who then
7 could resell it in three years to anyone is
8 modern-day genocide. When Tribes are facing the
9 threat of losing a subsistence use area, they need
10 to be consulted and included in the process.
11 (Speaks in Native language) thank you for allowing
12 me to comment today and for putting this tribal
13 consultation together. I look forward to positive
14 change, and I'm ready to fight for our future
15 generations. (Speaks in Native language).

16 MR. NEWLAND: Thank you, Bruce, for your
17 comments and taking time with us today. Next up,
18 I had Brooke Woods.

19 MS. THOMPSON: She had to hop off.

20 MR. NEWLAND: Oh, okay. So, again, I'm
21 going to go to Qunmigu Kacey Hopson, apologies if
22 I mispronounced your name.

1 MS. HOPSON: Hi, good afternoon, and no
2 worries.

3 (Speaks in Native language). I am
4 Qunmigu Kacey Hopson. I am Inupiaq
5 from the communities of (inaudible)
6 but Zooming in from Dena'ina
7 Homelands today. Today, I am
8 speaking on behalf of First
9 Alaskans Institute, as their
10 Indigenous and Governmental Affairs
11 Strategist. We are a statewide
12 Alaska Native nonprofit, staffed
13 with an all-Alaska Native Staff and
14 Board.

15 One important issue we focus on is the
16 protection of our ways of life. I appreciate you
17 accommodating my comments today, as we're at the
18 very end of the comment period. So, I'll keep my
19 comments short. I want to also acknowledge all
20 the Tribal Leaders who have taken their time to
21 share their concerns with you, and we stand in
22 agreement with many of the recommendations that

1 were made today and yesterday to address the
2 longstanding issues that we're facing here,
3 regarding our ways of life in Alaska. In
4 particular, I wanted to highlight the
5 recommendations made by the Tanana Chief's
6 Conference, TCC, earlier today, regarding amending
7 ANILCA Title VIII, appointing five public members
8 to the Federal Subsistence Board with intimate
9 knowledge of our ways of life, three of those
10 representing our Tribal Governments and moving the
11 Office of Subsistence Management to the Office of
12 the Secretary.

13 I would like to present some comments
14 from our Protecting Our Ways of Life Working
15 Group. This working group is made up of Tribes,
16 Native corporations, members of Hunting and
17 Fishing Taskforces, Resource Organizations, Tribal
18 advocates, Native nonprofits, researchers, and
19 professors, and dedicated allies to our ways of
20 life. And we have come together in a
21 collaborative effort by -- across the state to
22 address many of these enduring inequities that we

1 are here today to talk about.

2 One point that we would like to make is
3 to address the issue within the North Pacific
4 Fisheries Management Council. They do not
5 currently have a direct directive or requirement
6 to consult with Tribes in Alaska, and our Tribal
7 Governments are rarely heard in those spaces, and
8 that is at great cost to our ability to live our
9 ways of life and to our fisheries. The North
10 Pacific Fisheries Management Council currently has
11 no Native representation either. So, we would
12 like to request, at least at minimum, one Tribal
13 seat on the Council, if not more, and for official
14 consultation to take place between the Council and
15 our Tribes, at a regular basis.

16 I will not repeat some of the other
17 points that were made today, though many of them
18 are ones that we support. But I would also like
19 to add to the record that we would like to amend
20 the Federal Subsistence Board annual personal
21 review policy to make it such that bonuses should
22 evaluate how well the intent of ANILCA is followed

1 and implemented, as well as how the Federal
2 Subsistence Board has worked with Tribal partners.

3 I would also like to add into the record
4 that Federal Research and Monitoring Program,
5 FRMP, funding should be equally distributed among
6 the sovereigns operating in Alaska. The State of
7 Alaska currently receives 90 percent of the
8 project funding, and we feel that those funds
9 should, in fact, be distributed to the Tribes,
10 equally.

11 We would also like to request an
12 amendment to the selection process for the Federal
13 Subsistence Management Program Regional Advisory
14 Councils, the RACs, to require Tribal input and
15 participation and complete the necessary
16 secretarial appointments to fill vacant seats on
17 the RACs.

18 Finally, I would like to reinforce a
19 request made earlier to require all Senior
20 Advisors in Alaska Leadership positions and
21 Cabinet Members to take Racial Equity Training and
22 Alaska Native Governance and Protocols Training.

1 And this is something that First Alaskans
2 Institute does offer. There are several more
3 recommendations that our Protecting Our Ways of
4 Life Working Group has created, and we have these
5 in writing and are prepared to submit them to you.
6 And I believe we have submitted them in the past,
7 to Raina Thiele, and are happy to send again.
8 Thank you for hearing comments today, and I
9 appreciate your time and dedication to this issue,
10 and thank you for accommodating my comments, as
11 well.

12 MR. NEWLAND: Thank you so much, and I
13 appreciate you sharing your perspective,
14 particularly the importance of representation on
15 these bodies that make management decisions that
16 affect Indian People and the exercise of inherent
17 rights in our communities. That's a theme that
18 we've been hearing throughout not only this
19 consultation, but every consultation that we're
20 doing, as agencies, across the board. I do
21 appreciate that. I want to turn to Karen Gillis,
22 and I also just want to respond to a comment you

1 made about the Fisheries Management Council not
2 having a directive to engage in Tribal
3 consultation, that the Executive Order 13175 is
4 the directive for all Executive Branch Federal
5 Agencies to engage in Tribal consultation.

6 So, you know, we're going to -- we, at
7 Interior, as through the White House Council, are
8 working hard to make sure that all Federal
9 agencies understand that obligation and are
10 fulfilling it. So, I wanted to make sure I noted
11 that because I don't want things like that to just
12 kind of be accepted. All Federal agencies have
13 that obligation, and we're working hard to make
14 sure we're all living up to that. So, thank you
15 for that. I want to go now to our last speaker
16 for this consultation session, Karen Gillis.

17 MS. GILLIS: Good afternoon and thank
18 you. I'm -- I raised my hand because there was
19 someone having trouble with that, and I'm going to
20 defer to Jackie Cleveland and her Tribal Council
21 Member, Jonathan, I'm sorry, if she's still on the
22 line.

1 MR. NEWLAND: If you're on the line and
2 you're on the phone, you can press *6 to unmute
3 yourself.

4 MS. CLEVELAND: Okay, I got it. Hi,
5 everyone. I'm sorry about that. I'm here with
6 Joshua Cleveland, since Karen -- I think she said
7 another name, but it's Joshua Cleveland. We're
8 both Tribal Council Members of the Native Village
9 of Quinhagak. We're both Yupik, and -- well, he
10 is a respected elder of Quinhagak and will also
11 speak after me. So, I won't take up too much of
12 your time. What I'm calling about is specifically
13 to Quinhagak and some of the things that we've
14 been going through here.

15 So, Quinhagak is uniquely situated in
16 the southern coast of the Yukon Ququngaq Region,
17 but it also lies along the Quinhagak National
18 Wildlife Refuge. We're also sandwiched between
19 two freshwater rivers, the Kniktok (phonetic) and
20 Anaroldik (phonetic) Rivers. And although we are
21 known for our abundance in food security within
22 this region, I personally don't think that's the

1 case now, and a lot of it has to do with climate
2 change effects and how it's affecting our food
3 security.

4 Not only is climate change causing
5 coastal river erosion and melting permafrost
6 underneath us at an alarming rate, but the
7 changing and extreme weather patterns are also
8 affecting the way we subsist for food, if even
9 available. We, as some of you may know, the most
10 active caribou population in this area has
11 declined. We haven't been able to harvest any of
12 them for a couple years now. They were once -- we
13 once relied on them as our main food source, along
14 with salmon. But as far as big game, we do have a
15 good moose population we harvest from, on limited
16 openings. And during those limited openings, we
17 face extreme weather challenges that keeps or
18 hunters from braving the outdoors. At times,
19 moose, themselves, won't brave the weather and
20 stay hunkered down in the trees, so we don't see
21 them for sometimes 10 days. They sit there.

22 When it comes to our other main food

1 source of salmon, we are starting to see similar
2 declines as with Kuskokwim and Yukon River that
3 are seeing with their Chums and King Salmon, which
4 are less quality and quantity. They're a lot
5 smaller this year, after getting them pushed back
6 from commercial fishing and some aerial surveys.
7 We have a dramatic decline of Chum here, as well,
8 and as everyone -- all the local knowledge
9 indicates here, the King Salmon are much smaller.

10 Our waters are under state jurisdiction
11 and are open to all fisheries at this time,
12 subsistence, commercial, and sport fishing, all
13 the while there is no monitoring or data
14 collecting of any of the species besides an
15 occasional aerial survey. And we need to know
16 what's leaving and how much, otherwise we are
17 fishing blindly, at full force. And I could go on
18 and on about fish, you know, like we have tons of
19 Pike Fish that are taking over the chub (phonetic)
20 population here, and we're not sure how that
21 happened.

22 But as a kid, we ate a lot of dried seal

1 meat, and we had at least (phonetic) a month of
2 seal oil in every home it seemed. And it seems
3 like a rarity these days because marine mammals
4 are going out further into the ocean, where there
5 is more ice for them to reproduce, which means
6 hunters and -- hunters are having to risk their
7 lives by traveling further into the open sea to
8 harvest. And with the mixture of freshwater in
9 the sea with saltwater, the buoyancy of these
10 marine mammals is affected by that, as well,
11 causing them to sink faster after being caught and
12 sometimes not being -- there's not enough time to
13 clean them in time.

14 As everyone knows, the waterfall and
15 migration are the -- it's so much change with
16 their migration. A lot are moving out to the
17 coast, further out of the coast, flying over the
18 ocean, where we don't see or can't reach them.
19 And even the way we gather plants and berries is
20 sometimes life- threatening now. Our first edible
21 plants (audio drop) which is buttercup grow in the
22 lakes where there's usually stable ice to support

1 us while we harvest them. We are now falling
2 through this ice more and more, and it's even got
3 to the point where I tell kids and elders that if
4 they're going to get this plant to wear a life
5 jacket. Sometimes, when there's no snow, we don't
6 get a whole species of berries that grow, and
7 we'll have to, you know, trade -- either trade
8 from other regions or just live without that
9 certain berry. And so, one more thing is our
10 people, they rely on underground storage the
11 permafrost once provided for us. And even in my
12 lifetime I saw that. We used to store a lot of
13 fish underground, and both for the dock season,
14 for the -- and that we could store food and
15 medications (phonetic) but this is history
16 (phonetic) because the permafrost is melting at an
17 alarming rate, as well, keeping us from doing
18 that.

19 So, everything I've reported is sourced
20 from local traditional knowledge here in
21 Quinhagak, and, overall, local traditional
22 knowledge and Tribal consultation sometimes being

1 nonexistent in resource management here. Instead,
2 locals are being watched under a microscope, while
3 hunting and fishing followed by science most of
4 the time. The statements are, at the time, needs
5 to be focused on sport and hunt fishing, sport
6 fishing and sport hunting, as well. And of
7 course, as everybody agrees, seems to agree and
8 have -- a lot have said we need more
9 representation of Indigenous Leaders within
10 decision-making spaces and that local traditional
11 knowledge is, in fact, science, and should be just
12 as relevant as western science, when deciding on
13 our survival and wellbeing. Thank you, everyone,
14 for listening. I'm going to turn it over to our
15 elder, Joshua Cleveland. (Speaks in Native
16 language).

17 MR. CLEVELAND: Hello, my name is Joshua
18 Cleveland. I'm (audio drop) I am pleased that you
19 have, and the good word tells me that I am made
20 from the ground and given ways to live. So, this
21 means that the Tribe has given us three things our
22 ancestors want me to do and have, and it's very

1 important. A home keep me warm and sleep. I must
2 eat fruit and vegetables daily. I must hunt for
3 food and fish. Those are the things that (audio
4 drop). We are still eating from the Earth's
5 resources. It is our plate and our table, land
6 and bird sources, our (audio drop) animal, and
7 fish sources.

8 Alaska has a notable four seasons, and,
9 yeah, very notable here in Alaska. Past seasons
10 have shown (audio drop). They come in the
11 summertime spawn still (phonetic) in the lake and
12 a lot of the growth in the springtime and summer.
13 They came, salmon, so, that's in the winter and
14 fall. (Inaudible) to harvest from, as they're --
15 as they become available and open to us.

16 We want to thank the Federal Board to
17 allow us to take place (phonetic) for our
18 subsistence uses. We think they've been harder to
19 get, though. Ice is Alaska's highway, as you
20 know, for Alaska Natives because there are no
21 roads here in how it works in Alaska, and the
22 Interior, and in the North. So, we can watch it

1 in the summertime, especially in the kind of
2 Southwest Alaska. They are the only good sources
3 of travel for us.

4 But ice is getting thinner and climate
5 change is affecting us with that. It's making
6 hunting and travel harder because the ice gets
7 thinner. It makes our subsistence efforts that
8 much harder by staying home. And the Board
9 (inaudible) because the ice melts sooner than the
10 earlier times. (Audio drop) be on top of those
11 ices and easier to get faster on top of the ice,
12 not to be hazardous for children, and try to
13 (audio drop). At least, it's making it hard to
14 get those, you know, from the sea (phonetic)
15 because the ice is getting thinner, and it's
16 melting earlier in the spring.

17 Winds may become more troublesome in the
18 ocean (phonetic) as we see them in the Southwest,
19 you're right, Southeast United States. They're
20 common -- they're common over there, and I will
21 share (phonetic) that it's a relative term. Winds
22 may become more often in our area and harder for

1 us to travel with a small boat. We must protect
2 ourselves for our wellbeing, with the help of our
3 Federal Government, and our land and also
4 communities, in other words, in order to continue
5 to provide, so that the critical steps (phonetic)
6 that you guys need to, you know, keep numbers to
7 take some and predict others while we are getting
8 fewer. But it's thankful again for you guys to
9 otherwise to take some, even though the numbers
10 are getting lower. We are thankful for that. So,
11 that's the end of my -- thanks. Thank you for
12 listening.

13 MR. NEWLAND: Thank you so much, Mr.
14 Cleveland, for your comments today at this
15 consultation. We're at the end of our comment
16 period today. I just want to recap some of the
17 themes that we've been hearing throughout this
18 consultation session. They're pretty consistent.
19 We've heard a lot of frustration from folks about
20 the language in statute, setting up a rural
21 preference, and the effects that it has on Native
22 People across Alaska, and a desire from many

1 attendees to have a statutory change to Native
2 preference in ANILCA. We have heard about the
3 RACs and other management bodies needing better
4 representation from Tribal communities. We've
5 heard a lot about the impact of a changing climate
6 on the abundance of salmon. We've also heard
7 comments about making resource decisions that make
8 it more difficult for people in Tribal communities
9 to harvest salmon for consumption and subsistence
10 use, while commercial outfits in the North Pacific
11 and Bering Sea are catching a lot of salmon
12 through bycatch.

13 We've certainly heard it repeatedly
14 throughout these consultations about the
15 importance of subsistence harvest to just continue
16 traditional lifeways and making sure that people
17 have food to eat in places where food isn't
18 readily available or is very expensive at the
19 grocery stores. And also, we've heard about the
20 need to protect critical habitat and ecosystems to
21 ensure that fish, and moose, and caribou, and
22 other animals are in abundance and healthy and in

1 balance, so that they're available to -- available
2 for food harvest.

3 I've really appreciated the opportunity
4 to participate in these listening sessions and to
5 hear directly from so many of you. I'm sorry if
6 we weren't able to get to more folks who wanted to
7 comment. But we do have a period, again, where
8 you can submit written comments to us. I assure
9 you that we do take all of these comments that we
10 hear that we've received from you and fold that
11 into our workstreams, and we're trying to do
12 better to make sure we're fulfilling our trust
13 obligations to Native People, particularly in
14 Alaska, where you are trying to continue to live
15 your traditional lifeways, have access to the food
16 that your people have eaten since long before this
17 country was founded, and work with all of you to
18 protect our lands and waters and make sure that we
19 have a healthy planet.

20 I do want to flip it over to Heather
21 Dawn to see if I missed anything in your view, and
22 if you have any observations before we close it

1 out?

2 MS. THOMPSON: No, I just really wanted
3 to thank everybody. I think there's a lot of
4 consistency in the theme, which -- that we're
5 hearing, which is really helpful. It gives us
6 things to very much focus down in on, and, you
7 know, the Forest Service has been having some
8 localized conversations with many of the Tribes,
9 particularly in Southeast Alaska, and these are
10 consistent with those conversations, as well. We
11 also really appreciate NOAA getting on the line
12 with us during these consultations. You know, the
13 trawling and the bycatch issues have come up
14 pretty consistently over the last six months. So,
15 we appreciate you guys being here in the
16 conversations with us, as well as the
17 representation on the Fishing Councils. So, we
18 really look forward to collating all of your
19 inputs and look forward to the written comments,
20 which really help us narrow down the conversation.
21 So, thanks so much, again, DOI, NOAA, and Tribal
22 Leaders.

1 MR. NEWLAND: Thanks, Heather Dawn.
2 Kelly, I saw you in the corner of my screen, down
3 there. So, I didn't want to leave NOAA out, if
4 you have any final observations or thoughts.

5 DR. KRYC: I'm happy to echo my
6 gratitude to everyone for their thoughtful
7 comments, and I'll just speak on behalf of Janet,
8 for those of you who did submit comments regarding
9 the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council in
10 the chat, after she left, I captured those and
11 sent those along to her. And certainly, from my
12 seat, International Fisheries, we are paying
13 attention to bycatch issues, as well, and NOAA
14 looks forward to working with all of you, going
15 forward, to address some of the concerns that you
16 raised today. Thank you for sharing those with
17 us.

18 MR. NEWLAND: Thanks, Kelly. I --
19 again, thanks all, thanks to all of you for
20 participating today, and those of you who joined
21 us yesterday, as well. I know how difficult it
22 can be to sit through all of these sessions,

1 especially when you're patiently waiting to share
2 a few minutes worth of remarks. I assure you that
3 we're all on the line listening. And also, I just
4 want to extend our thoughts and our prayers and
5 well wishes to all of you, you know, during this
6 pandemic. We know it's been very difficult for
7 folks. We all want it to end and be over. And I
8 know that many of you have lost loved ones or may
9 have folks in your household or your community who
10 are sick right now, and we just wish you all good
11 health, safety, and we're working together with
12 all of you to get us through this safely, and I
13 hope that we can gather again in person soon
14 enough. So, please take care. Thank you for
15 joining. And that will conclude our consultation.

16 (Whereupon, at 5:25 p.m., the
17 PROCEEDINGS were adjourned.)

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CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY PUBLIC

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

I, Kendra Hammer, notary public in and for the District of Columbia, do hereby certify that the forgoing PROCEEDING was duly recorded and thereafter reduced to print under my direction; that the witnesses were sworn to tell the truth under penalty of perjury; that said transcript is a true record of the testimony given by witnesses; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which this proceeding was called; and, furthermore, that I am not a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

(Signature and Seal on File)

Notary Public, in and for the District of Columbia

